

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GEORGE 01678 291842Z
ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO USINFO WASHDC
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UNCLAS GEORGETOWN 1678

FOR IOP/M, ILA; SECSTATE FOR ARA; AID WASH FOR GUYANA DESK OFFICER

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: MEDIA COVERAGE OF USAID ACTIVITIES IN GUYANA

1. REFLECTING GENERALLY IMPROVING US-GOG RELATIONS, GEORGETOWN MEDIA HAVE GIVEN FULL AND ACCURATE COVERAGE TO SIGNING OF TWO USAID AGREEMENTS WITH GOG DURING JULY. GOG-OWNED DAILY GUYANA CHRONICLE COVERED EACH SIGNING CEREMONY WITH BOTH LEAD-UP ARTICLE, IN BOTH CASES BASED ON MISSION RELEASE, THEN FOLLOW-UP STORY BASED ON REMARKS OF PARTICIPANTS. BOTH LOCAL RADIO STATIONS ALSO GAVE GOOD COVERAGE OF ALL EVENTS DURING PRIME NEWS TIME.

2. FIRST AGREEMENT WAS FOR USAID SOFT LOAN OF US\$1. MILLION FOR MANAGEMENT TRAINING AND ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. FRONT PAGE LEAD ARTICLE OF JULY 13 CHRONICLE WITH HEAD "MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR PROJECT TO UPGRADE MANAGEMENT TRAINING" STRESSES PROJECT'S GOAL OF IMPROVING GUYANA'S CAPABILITY TO PLAN, DESIGN AND ADMINISTER TRAINING PROGRAMS TO DEVELOP HUMAN RESOURCES. QUOTING MISSION PRESS RELEASE, ARTICLE SAYS LOAN IS ON AID'S "MOST CONCESSIONAL" TERMS. JULY 14 CHRONICLE HAS PHOTO OF SIGNING CEREMONY WITH GOG FINANCE MINISTER HOPE, ACTING AID DIRECTOR PAYNE AND US CHARGE BLACKEN, WITH ARTICLE BASED ON REMARKS OF HOPE AND BLACKEN. HOPE
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SAID "GUYANA WAS HAPPY THAT IT HAD BEEN POSSIBLE FOR AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED," AND THAT "THERE HAD BEEN 'A CERTAIN WILLINGNESS' ON THE PART OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION TO UNDERSTAND GUYANA'S VIEWS AND TO FIND A COMPROMISE FORMULA FOR THE LOAN." HOPE NOTED "NEGOTIATIONS FOR LOAN HAD STARTED FOUR YEARS AGO," BUT WERE "PUT IN COLD STORAGE BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCE OF VIEWS." A "CLOSING OF THE GAP IN VIEWS" WHEN

NEW US ADMINISTRATION TOOK OVER HAD LED TO SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF AGREEMENT. CHARGE BLACKEN QUOTED AS SAYING LOAN WAS "EVIDENCE OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION' DESIRE TO FOSTER DEVELOPMENT BOTH HERE AND IN OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES," AND HE NOTED "I THINK THAT RELATIONS HAVE COME A LONG WAY TOWARD NORMALISATION ALREADY AND THE LOAN ITSELF IS EVIDENCE OF THAT."

3. SECOND AGREEMENT WAS USAID GRANT OF US \$100,000 FOR COMMUNITY SELF-HELP PROJECT. JULY 15 CHRONICLE CARRIED ALMOST VERBATIM MISSION PRESS RELEASE ON THE AGREEMENT, WHICH SAYS PROCEEDS OF THE GRANT "WILL BE DIRECTED TOWARD THOSE ACTIVITIES WHICH HAVE IMMEDIATE IMPACT ON ECONOMIC OR SOCIAL IMPROVEMENT OF LIVES OF PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY AND IN WHICH SELF-HELP BY THE LOCAL COMMUNITY IS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT." ARTICLE ENDS WITH STATEMENT THAT USG HAS PROVIDED OVER US \$425,000 IN GRANTS TO GUYANA SINCE 1965 TO FINANCE SMALL SELF-HELP ACTIVITIES. JULY 16 CHRONICLE HAS LARGE INSIDE-PAGE HEAD "US GOVT. GIVES DOLLARS TO FINANCE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES" WITH PHOTO OF SIGNING CEREMONY. ARTICLE BEGINS WITH STATEMENT BY GOG ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MINISTER HOYTE THAT "THE US \$100,000 GRANT... WAS A DEFINITE INDICATION OF THE NORMALISATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN GEORGETOWN AND WASHINGTON." ARTICLE CONTINUES, "ASKED WHETHER HE WOULD SAY THAT THE GRANT WAS AN INDICATION OF THE US GOVERNMENT'S ACCEPTANCE OF GUYANA'S SELF-HELP
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ENDEAVOR, HOYTE SAID 'I WOULD SAY THAT THE GRANT IS EVIDENCE OF THE UNDERSTANDING BY THE PRESENT US ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF GUYANA.'"

4. JULY 16 CHRONICLE HAS FRONT PAGE LEAD ARTICLE WITH HEAD "14 MILLION (GUYANAESE DOLLAR) ROAD PLAN BACK IN TOP GEAR", WRITTEN BY ITS REPORTER, ON MAJOR ROAD PROJECT TO IMPROVE APPROACHES TO GEORGETOWN AND NEW AMSTERDAM AND TO BUILD ONE RIVER BRIDGE. CITING FINANCE MINISTER HOPE, WRITER SAYS "ABOUT TWO THIRDS OF THE COSTS ARE BEING FINANCED BY A LOAN FROM THE USAID." REFERRING TO FACT THAT AGREEMENT ON USAID LOAN FOR THIS PROJECT HAD BEEN SIGNED SOME TIME AGO BUT THAT WORK DELAYED DUE TO BUDGET STRINGENCIES, "HOPE EXPLAINED THAT DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD WITH USAID AND AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON A FORMULA FOR THE ROAD CONSTRUCTION TO RESUME AT NORMAL PACE. THE FORMULA RELATED TO SCHEDULING OF FUNDS FROM USAID, HE SAID."

5. JULY 26 CHRONICLE HAS BACK-PAGE ARTICLE HEADED "USAID HANDS OVER SECOND SUM OF EAST COAST ROAD PROJECT." WITH PHOTO OF USAID DIRECTOR HANDING OVER CHECK FOR G\$500,000 TO ACTING ACCOUNTANT-GENERAL. ARTICLE BEGINS: "USAID YESTERDAY

HANDED OVER A CHECK FOR G\$500,000 TO MINISTRY OF FINANCE TO
BE USED FOR CONTINUING WORK ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FOUR-LANE
ROAD...." ARTICLE THEN QUOTES USAID DIRECTOR AS SAYING THAT
MOST OF THE EQUIPMENT ON THE PROJECT WAS DONATED BY USG, AND
THAT TOTAL AMOUNT GIVEN TO GOG SO FAR IS G\$7 MILLION WITH A
BALANCE OF G\$8.8 MILLION TO BE HANDED OVER; HE ALSO SAID
THAT "USAID WOULD CONTINUE TO MAKE ADVANCES TO GOG IN ORDER
TO ENSURE THAT CONSTRUCTION WORK CONTINUES ON THIS PROJECT."
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